7: Furnivall G-4, 5 (no date) 1948 AL1 Southeast Asia AL1

type of education with their religious teaching did their resources permit'. Some, however, are suspicious of efficiency. '*Education*', wrote Bishop Weston, 'is in danger of killing Africans, soul and body. I view with great alarm the movement for educating Africans as quickly as possible.... Education is the right of Africa—but education as practised at present will be Africa's curse.'[1]

The restriction of official support to the more 'efficient' type of missionary school reacts on female education. In Africa since 1925, as in India since the time of Curzon, the importance of female education as a means of promoting social welfare has been emphasized. There was the same apprehension that was felt in Java as to Moslem reactions, but in 1936 experience was held to justify the reaffirmation of this principle with greater confidence, and female instruction went ahead—to the prejudice of female education. In the domestic education of women the missionaries were doing useful work. 'There are few stations where some girls or women are not receiving a valuable if limited training in the domestic sciences or in the care of children, in nursing or midwifery, or as teachers.'[2] This was education—learning a new way of life not from text-books but by example and experience in an appropriate environment; but it could not be tested by examinations, or easily be recognized by grants conditional on any mass criterion of efficiency, and financial limitations and the doctrine of efficiency are causing the withdrawal of official grants from most of such schools. In Burma the American Baptists have done similar work among the Karens, with the indirect result that, among all the native peoples, the Karen Christians show far the highest percentage of female literacy. But that is not all. Many Karen girls after passing through the high schools, or even the university, willingly return to domestic duties in the village and the home. It is different with the Burmese. Despite the tradition of female literacy, there was no systematic provision of instruction for the girls. The women do most of the petty trade and, when the British Government opened schools to them, the girls in towns hastened to take advantage of their new opportunities. But it is only of late years that many have sought more advanced education in western schools, and these seem to be actuated by the same motive as their brothers, the desire to get 'a decent job'.[3] Whether female 'education' among westernized Burmese

[1] Maynard Smith, H., *Frank, Bishop of Zanzibar* (1926), p. 257.
[2] *African Survey*, pp. 1229, 1231, 1255.
[3] *RPI*, 1927–32, p. 25.

7: Furnivall G-4, 5 (no date) 1948 AL1 Southeast Asia AL1

871 762 will produce better mothers, or birth control and cheaper typists, is a question for the future.

9. Vernacular Education

872 So far we have been dealing in the main with western education, and have seen that the prospect of gain is sufficient to crowd the schools beyond capacity, but only so far, and in such directions, as they lead to a remunerative certificate; and that all values, other than examination values, are at a discount. Primary vernacular education provides the obverse of this picture because, in general, it does not pay; it is merely an instrument of human welfare. Since the beginning of the nineteenth century the diffusion of general enlightenment in India through primary instruction has been a main objective of humanitarian sympathy; this principle was adopted and placed in the forefront of official policy from the middle of the century, and it was reaffirmed by Curzon at its close. Yet the progress achieved 'is shown by statistics admitted by the highest educational authorities to be thoroughly unsatisfactory',[1] and in Burma, which started the nineteenth century under native rule with a literate male population, the picture of primary instruction after a hundred years of British rule is 'one of almost unrelieved gloom'.[2] For over a hundred years there has been general agreement in India that primary instruction is the most effective instrument of material and moral welfare, yet, so far as there has been any progress under either head since the time of Wilberforce and Carey, it certainly cannot be attributed to the spread of primary instruction. This has not spread because there has been no demand for it. Now that it is again proclaimed with new insistence as the chief aim of modern educational policy in the tropics generally, some examination of the grounds on which it has been advocated seems expedient. Apart from humanitarian considerations they fall under two heads, political and economic.

872 21 Many have urged the spread of vernacular instruction on grounds of political convenience. Curzon cited with approval the dictum that 'among all sources of administrative difficulty and political danger, few are so serious as the ignorance of the people'.[3] This view is still widely held. Mass education is recommended as a safeguard against explosive temper liable to produce a social upheaval. One is told that 'an increase of literacy makes the people easier to control and govern',

[1] Mayhew, *India*, p. 226.
[2] *CVV*, p. 156.
[3] *RPI* (India), 1897–1902, p. 462; *Mass Education*, p. 7; Mayhew, *India*, p. 226.